

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6888

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 05419

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, PFOR, PGOV, UK, WB, GW, GE, FR, US

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: INTERFLUG CHARTER FLIGHT BETWEEN
SCHOENEFELD AND GATWICK

REF: 76 BONN 18303

1. UK CIVIL AIR ATTACHE (CAA) HANLEY MARCH 25 TOLD HIS FRENCH AND US COLLEAGUES THAT HMG HAD PERMITTED INTERFLUG TO FLY A CHARTER ON MARCH 24 FROM GATWICK TO SCHOENEFELD. THIS WAS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF TWELVE APPLIED FOR BY INTERFLUG, BUT THE OTHER ELEVEN AND ANY OTHER FUTURE APPLICATION WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED.

2. AS HANLEY DESCRIBED IT, THE UK PERMISSION TO INTERFLUG WAS THE RESULT OF A FAILURE OF THE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY TO COORDINATE WITH THE FCO. HANLEY WAS ASKED FOR HIS COMMENT ON THE CLEARANCE A
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FEW DAYS BEFORE THE FLIGHT WAS DUE TO TAKE PLACE. THE UK EMBASSY DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE AN UNREASON-
ABLE INCONVENIENCE TO THE BRITISH PASSENGERS WHO HAD PURCHASED TICKETS IN GOOD FAITH TO CANCEL THE FLIGHT ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE.

3. THE FCO HAD BEEN NOTIFIED "SOME TIME AGO" OF AN

INTERFLUG INFORMAL FEELER ON SUCH FLIGHTS, HAD SAID THEY WERE "SKEPTICAL" AND ASKED TO BE INFORMED WHEN AN APPLICATION WAS RECEIVED. PROBABLY BECAUSE THE APPLICATION WAS HANDLED IN A ROUTINE MANNER ALONG WITH NUMEROUS OTHER APPLICATIONS FROM EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND WAS HANDLED BY PERSONNEL NOT SENSITIVE TO THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE FLIGHT, THE FCO WAS IN FACT NOT INFORMED. THE UK EMBASSY IN BONN AND THE UK MISSION IN BERLIN HAVE RECOMMENDED TO THE FCO THAT THE REST OF THE SERIES BE CANCELLED AND THIS HAS BEEN DONE.

4. HANLEY GAVE AS REASONS FOR TURNING DOWN THE REMAINDER OF THE INTERFLUG FLIGHTS THE UNDESIRABILITY OF HELPING THE GDR TO USE SCHOENEFELD TO COMPETE WITH TEGEL, THE OFFICIAL RECOGNITION INVOLVED OF FLIGHTS ENTERING THE BERLIN CONTROL ZONE BUT NOT PROCESSED BY THE BERLIN AIR SAFETY CENTER, THE PROBABLE ADVERSE REACTION FROM THE ALLIES AND BERLIN AND THE POSSIBLE INCONSISTENCY OF PERMITTING ONLY UK CARRIERS TO FLY CHARTERS BETWEEN LONDON AND WEST BERLIN WHILE ALLOWING A GDR CARRIER TO DO SO BETWEEN LONDON AND SCHOENEFELD.

5. COMMENT: ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF UK FAILING TO CONSULT ON A MATTER RELEVANT TO BERLIN AVIATION WAS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A BRITISH AIRWAYS OFFICE IN EAST BERLIN WHICH ALLIES LEARNED ABOUT FROM THE PRESS (REFTEL). WHILE WE PRESUMABLY MUST ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE THAT THE INTERFLUG FLIGHT BEING PERMITTED

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WAS AN OVERSIGHT AND THAT THERE IS NO PRESENT INTENTION TO GRANT FUTURE CLEARANCES, AN ADMONITION WOULD STILL SEEM APPROPRIATE IN VIEW OF THE BREACH OF A RATHER IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE OF NOT HELPING THE GDR TO COMPETE WITH WEST BERLIN AVIATION AND ESPECIALLY OF NOT DOING SO WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH THE ALLIES. THE EMBASSY CAA AND THE BONN GROUP REPRESENTATIVES (IN A TRI-PARTITE MEETING) WILL EXPRESS USG REGRET AT THE UK LAPSE, OUR HOPE THAT STEPS WILL BE TAKEN TO PREVENT SUCH INCIDENTS IN THE FUTURE, AND THAT THE UK WILL CONSULT ITS ALLIES IN A TIMELY MANNER BEFORE PERMITTING ANY SUCH FLIGHTS IN THE FUTURE.

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 28-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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